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SOME PROBLEMS OF EMPIRE

BY

THE HON. GEORGE E. FOSTER

Minister of Trade and Commerce, Canada

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**THE RIGHT HON. EARL GREY, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.
IN THE CHAIR**



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THE opening meeting of the session was held on Tuesday, November 12, 1912.

Earl GREY, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., President of the Institute, presided, and in opening the proceedings, said that at the first meeting of a new session it was customary for the chairman to say something about the position of the Institute. It was the ambition of the Council to make the Institute an ever-increasingly powerful instrument for welding together the component parts of the Empire in close and indissoluble union. The interest which was taken all round the world in the Empire, in every question which made for the increased strength and efficiency of the British Crown, provided them with an opportunity which it would be most unpatriotic on their part if they did not take advantage of. Since the last general meeting in June they had elected 1,159 Fellows, and of that large number 463 came from Canada, and ninety from Rhodesia. The fact that forty of the comparatively small white population of Northern Rhodesia had applied to be enrolled as Fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute, justified them in believing that only a little effort was required to enable them to ensure an increase in the number of Fellows from the present number of 7,000 to a much higher figure. Personally he should be deeply disappointed if, by the end of the year, they did not bring up the number of the Fellowship to 8,000, and, before the end of 1913, to 10,000; and he was convinced that with the necessary organisation it would be possible to obtain, within the next few years, 100,000 Fellows and Associates contributing a minimum of £1 each per annum to the revenue of the Institute.

The fact that no fewer than forty Fellows had been recruited from Northern Rhodesia, mainly through the energy of one Fellow, Lieut.-Colonel A. St. Hill Gibbons, should be an encouragement to all other Fellows to follow his example. Looking to the increase in their Fellowship from Northern Rhodesia, he begged them to remember that Englishmen who devoted themselves to developing a Greater Britain on the fringes of the Empire did not hesitate to face the risks of privation, disease, and death, and further, when appealed to, did not grudge to contribute from out of their slender resources one guinea per annum to a fund to be used for Imperial purposes.

The work of the Institute was thoroughly Imperial and should be supported by every one who had the well-being of the Empire at heart.

There were few men, if any, who had a more intimate knowledge of the requirements of the Empire and who could so eloquently give expression to them as Mr. Foster, and he had now great pleasure in calling upon him to give his address on "Some Problems of Empire."

The Hon. GEORGE E. FOSTER (Minister of Trade and Commerce, Canada): I do not come before you with any paper or lecture. I come simply to have a brief talk, suggestive mainly. It will not be philosophy in tabloids or statistics in columns, but may perhaps serve to stir up your minds by way of remembrance and remind you that in other spheres and climes there are a very respectable number of people who subscribe to the principles of this Institute and are trying to work them out in practice. There are people living to-day who think that this great British Empire of ours has been a gigantic experiment—an experiment which had its origin not in design but rather in chance and circumstance and necessity. There may be a good many who think even now that the Empire is still somewhat of an experiment. With reference to that experiment there is one essential thing which, if it be present, may make it a success in the future, and which has made it the success it has been in the years past, and that is the unswerving loyalty of all parts of the Empire one to the other and wise direction in administration. It is fitting in this home of the United Empire, that a few words should be said by way of encouragement, tracing a little the path already trodden, and suggesting, it may be, something for the path that remains to be traversed.

WHAT IS AN IMPERIALIST ?

I belong to the somewhat large family of Imperialists. We have been defined in a hundred different ways, and sometimes defined pretty well out of existence. Well, as I look at Imperialism, I should define an Imperialist to be a man who devoutly wishes that the Empire experiment be a success, and who works along the lines of loyalty and wise direction in order to make it a success. If that is to be an Imperialist that is what I am and what I think a great many people in this wide Empire of ours are. Sometimes we are defined as Jingoes, but the Imperialist is not by any means a Jingo. The Imperialist is an ardent believer in peace, and is firmly of the opinion that for an enduring and secure peace there is no better guarantee than an Empire like ours—filled up, made strong, and kept loyal. Sometimes it is said the Imperialist is a dreamer and idealist. I do not wish to deny that suggestion. The world would not have made much progress if there had not been, in every age, dreamers and idealists; but the Imperialist, if a dreamer and idealist, is practical withal, and I think the practical dreamer and idealist is the hope of this or any other country. But they say "You have been at it for many years, and what have you accomplished?" That is just the point I wish you to think over with me to-night.

Go back to the beginnings of our Empire and trace it towards the present time. You will find there have been two sets of forces at work, the first making for division—centrifugal so to speak—the second making for unity, centripetal in tendency.

FORCES THAT HAVE WORKED AGAINST UNITY.

I would first briefly indicate some of the principal of those dividing forces which have operated in the past history of the Empire and which I maintain are constantly declining forces.

One of the first was the vast and wide dispersion of what constituted the Empire. Every sea and clime possessed some portion larger or smaller of the disconnected

Empire under Britain's flag. That dispersion had in itself elements of danger, of weakness, of division, and of unrest. How is it to-day? Do you not believe with me that instead of being any longer a force for division it is rapidly assuming the position of a tremendous force in favour of strength and union? And this for several reasons: first, because ultimately it is going to give you a united Empire, with its centre in these northern seas, but buttressed by strong parts of the Empire in every ocean of the world; secondly, the very fact of the dispersion of our territories in this Empire is working out in another and very different way from what was thought. By the dispersion of your Empire territory you get all climes and products. Put your Empire all in one zone, and you have but a modified and restricted range of products. Now the sun in every part of the world kisses British Empire lands, evokes British Empire products, gives place for every wish and desire for habitation. Therefore you have again, in this very dispersion of our territory, an element of abiding and continuous strength.

Another of the disuniting forces may have been the lack and slowness of communication. Our forefathers, long years ago, if they saw a ship from the Mother Country once a year, had their hearts gladdened and their hopes strengthened. There was in that farness and distance an element of danger and disunion. But every century that has passed has reduced it. To-day communications are regular and frequent, whilst our great cities—Capetown, Sydney, Melbourne, Vancouver, Ottawa—sit down any hour of the day and talk with the centre of London. Communications therefore have improved to such an extent that I think I am correct in saying that, in this respect, there is a great decline in the possibility of consequent disruption for this cause.

Another element of weakness was the sparse British population. It was sparse at first. The few people flung into far-distant lands, right up against a rude and unconquered nature, against tribes of people who were unknown and hostile to them, had a constant struggle for existence, and there would have been little wonder if, in case after case, they had succumbed. Has not that danger decreased? Population is flowing in, constantly increasing, and to-day, 15,000,000 of people—white people—greet you from the oversea Dominions alone—a sturdy, British stock, but only the nucleus of millions more that are to be. Thus this also is a declining force.

There was also a lack of capital and labour. That has been, in the course of many long years, remedied in a large degree, and in the most developed of the oversea Possessions capital is flowing in—capital is being manufactured, so to speak, in the progress and wealth-production of these countries; labour is going in, and so, to-day, your steamers for Australasia and Canada are taxed to carry not only more men—more men offering than the steamers can accommodate—but capital as well, and skilled labour also from this great centre of capital and labour.

One other disuniting force was the lack of sympathy and interest in the Motherland itself. It is a harsh thing to say, but I take it as being absolutely the fact that, of all the discouragements the early struggling settlers in these wide-flung parts of the Empire had to meet and suffer the worst was that, in the midst of their struggles and sacrifices and deprivations, amidst the stern and rugged life they had to lead, they found sometimes but scant sympathy and interest in the Motherland itself. Now I take it that that was not a lack of sympathy and interest in the great heart of the Motherland itself. It was the doctrine of some politicians and some schools of thought, and did not at all represent the heart of the Empire. But what came to these outside strugglers? The note that sounded in their ears was "We who have

planted you and watched your struggles, if we have directed our eyes at all to you, think it better that the painter were cut and you were let go." This has entirely vanished. Show me to-day the public man on a public platform in this whole Empire that would offer a note so pessimistic and discouraging. Thus have I enumerated the chief, great, disuniting forces under the stress of which our Empire has struggled upward for hundreds of years. They have either altogether vanished, or they have declined to a degree which robs them for the future of the force they had in the past.

THE FORCES THAT MAKE FOR UNION.

Now consider with me the other set of forces—forces which in the past and to-day are making for union, and are joining in strong-set bonds the different parts of the Empire.

One of the primal and enduring bonds is blood and race. The descendants of British parents, in whatever parts of these islands, were proud of their blood and of the stock from which they sprang. They kept and held to that, and that held them together in many a discouraging hour.

Then there are the ties of tradition and literature, both strong and never once loosening their hold. I wish I had time to speak of them and the part they have played in our development—the fine and subtle cement of thought and sentiment firmly linking people sundered in so many other respects. These ties have held from the earliest times. To-day they exercise as much power in the outward direction as in any previous time, and now, back from the far-off Dominions, are coming return contributions with similar effect and power.

Then there is the tie of common institutions. It is not necessary for me to speak of them—how the British out-goer has held to them—how he has treasured them—how he has reproduced them in his own community and in his own nation. They have held against the assaults of ruder life, against the assaults of foreign example, and to-day, in all parts of the Empire, we are bound and welded together in a common love and practice of British institutions.

The army and the navy have always been a great binding force of the dispersed people of this Empire, a force which has been vital in keeping together its various out-lying parts. It is so to-day, but in a greater and more intimate sense. The army and the navy to-day are composed not simply of the British soldier and the British sailor. They have in them representatives of every part of the British Empire working together. It is our navy and our army—we who come from the oversea Dominions so claim it. We have not done all we should have done to support it, but we have always respected it. We have always relied upon it. Our sons have fought in your army and your navy, and to-day the keels of oversea Dominion ships float side by side in British waters with those of the old Mother Country, and as years go by their numbers will increase—our navy will be truly Imperial. It will have in it representatives from every part of the British Dominions. We have gone further than theory, and our soldiers have marched side by side with British soldiers, when the Empire was in peril and her fortunes were challenged. We know what took place in the Boer war; we know what would take place in any other war in which the stability and permanence of the Empire were threatened.

Another great bond of union has been the King and the Constitution. And would it be out of the way for me, as an overseas representative, to say that 'he King and Constitution are ours as well as yours—that in both we have vital interest just as

you have?—and when you here, as the predominant partner, have anything to do with the King and the Constitution, remember that you hold a trust from the oversea Dominions, for you are dealing with a priceless heritage shared by other parts of the Empire.

Something else has happened in a new way to bind the Empire together. Gradually the spirit of holding on, linking hands, and keeping together, grew up into an impulse that went further than the individual and the provincial, and not many years ago we saw the working out of that impulse in federations or unions of contiguous parts of the Empire—into new and young nationalities, as we like to call them. That was an entirely new development and one of the most powerful up to that time.

THE BIRTH OF A NATION.

I think that we in Canada have in one respect an advantage that you in Great Britain never had. You who are present can never say that you were at the birth and participated in the early growth of a new nation. You are the heirs of an old and long-formed nation. But many of us in Canada have witnessed the birth and assisted in the early building of a new nation, a phenomenon of entrancing and tremendous interest. In 1864-5, when the federation of the different provinces of Canada was mooted, I was a boy just entering college. I was a New Brunswicker. Nova Scotia existed, Quebec existed, Ontario existed; there was an indefinite notion that Britain had territory west of Ontario, and some stray information came to us that there was such a province as British Columbia on the Pacific Coast. All I knew about was New Brunswick, and all I cared about was New Brunswick. Others were cousins more or less removed, but national life for me there was none. I was limited to the boundary of my little province and I could throw a stone almost from one side to the other. What was true in my case was absolutely true in the case of every one in the scattered provinces. There was no soul, no national life, no national objective, no national ideal, no national impulse. I pass over the intervening years, and present to you the Dominion of Canada of to-day, where a new nation has been born, and a new great force developed for the Empire of the world, instinct with national life and Imperial spirit. Thereupon hope lights up the distant hills, and men's hearts burn within them; doubt has vanished, confidence holds the helm, and the future gleams strong and bright in the distance. I have lived the life and felt its thrill and seen the splendid transformation, and I shall never cease to be thankful therefor. Out of separation and weakness there has been evolved a mighty entity, vitalised with national spirit, national ideal, and national impulse. There you have an immense territory of contiguous separated portions of the British Empire of the former days, welded into one strong nationality, with a life of its own. What has happened? Progress almost immeasurable has taken place, which never would and never could have taken place if there had not been a union of ideals, a fusion of effort, and an impulse that came from the new-growing national life. Similar unions have taken place also in Australia, and in South Africa, and those two parts of the Empire are working out on the same lines, and feeling the same impulse as Canada. When people tell you that you have been long at work and nothing much has happened, point out that, if nothing else. It is one of the most real and hopeful signs that the grand, Imperial experiment will be thoroughly successful. At two periods in the history of this British Empire many prophets arose. The first period coincided with the grant of responsible government to the provinces. Then the burden

of their prophecy was: "Your Empire will break into pieces; your distant Possessions will not remain true to you." That has been falsified. When later these provinces federated, the prophets again stood up and said: "Ah, what we told you is coming, but in a different way. They have not broken away previously, but now they are making nations out of themselves and they will assuredly sever their connection with the Old Country." Again the prophets prophesied without any basis: for if there is one thing more marked than another, it is the seeming paradox that, just as soon as, and in proportion as, we became nationalised in parts we became the more strongly imperialised as a whole. To-day in Canada we are taunted with being more loyal than subjects of the King in the British Islands. I am not saying whether we are or not—I am not making that claim; but this I am saying—that we are more Imperial than we were before the federation of Canada and the establishment of our new national life.

THE FEELING OF INTERDEPENDENCE.

Since those federation times—Lord Grey knows as well as I, for he has had the experience—what has been the dominant feeling? This: a spirit and sense of interdependence and mutual helpfulness between these oversea federated Dominions with each other and with the Empire itself. Their attention was not monopolised by the new creation; they were not filled up with the idea that now they were young nationalities they must think only of themselves. But in proportion as they grew in nationhood, they grew in the practical feeling of interdependence one upon the other, and Dominion called to Dominion, and each called to the Motherland: "Is there anything in which we may be helpful to each other? Anything in which we can co-operate and encourage each other?" And the history of Canada and the other Dominions is a series of evolutions of helpful, co-operative, and co-ordinating work between these oversea Dominions and the Motherland and with the other oversea Dominions. To-day we have postal and cable and steamship communications, subsidised and supported by different parts of the Empire. We have the growing assimilation of our laws—commercial and other—doing away with hindrances between the trade and communication of the Mother Country and the Dominions. To make a long story short, we have done many things; not the least is that instead of jealously claiming all the trade we possibly could get, and to our own advantage, these oversea Dominions have given to each other, and have given to the Motherland, preferential treatment. You may like it or not. You may say that it conflicts with your theories or not. We gave it to you. You accepted it with a fairly smiling countenance, and to-day it is operative. We gave to the Mother Country better commercial treatment than we give to any stranger country. We give to other of the Dominions better treatment than we give to those who do not belong to our sisterhood. That is something in the way of binding and bringing together, and showing that because we have become young nations, we have not become utterly selfish. And with nothing even a little like boasting, let me say that the Dominion of Canada, when the West India Islands fell upon hard times, held out the hand as best we could and gave to those Islands for fifteen years the advantage of a 33½ per cent. preference in our markets, and we did not ask and did not expect any return. Seed sown on the waters sometimes brings forth bread, and after these fifteen years, under better and more favourable circumstances, we have just concluded, and in the course of a few weeks will put into operation, a mutual preference trade agreement between the main

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part of the West India Islands and the Dominion of Canada. Note also the frequent conferences we have had to smooth away differences and secure mutual advantages.

Here to-day, sitting in this city, is a Royal Imperial Commission, which never could have been if we had not had these federations in the outside Dominions; and this body is at work to-day, trying to find out what is inside all this great Empire, and how it may be best developed for the good and strength of the whole Empire. Again, there has developed in these later years the Imperial Conference, in which the Premiers of the different Dominions and of the Mother Country meet together every four years, take note of the situation, and discuss questions of mutual interest, and pursue plans for mutual improvement. Over and above that, there has been this latest of all developments—the invitation from the Imperial Defence Committee to the Premiers of the outside Dominions to enter with them into the Arcana of the Empire, and there to learn the conditions and circumstances of foreign policy and foreign defence. All this it seems to me may well be treasured up by the Imperialist of to-day, as irrevocable and irrefragable proof of the great steps forward to an ultimately completely united Empire. Nor has the forward movement been by any means stopped.

AN IMPERIAL CONSCIOUSNESS NEEDED.

It is absolutely impossible, to my mind, for this Empire movement to stop now that the course has been so well laid and the impetus given. It would require more force to stop the tendency towards complete union than it did at the first to par the impetus.

But we need still more, and one thing imperatively needed is the development of an Imperial consciousness. Our national consciousness is well developed—that of the Irishman for his native Ireland, the Scotchman for the land of his birth, the Welshman and the Englishman for theirs. The Imperial consciousness is not so keen and so strong and not so easily perfected. It is a more difficult process, and takes more time. The Scotchman is born and brought up in Scotland, and in the process he incorporates into his physical, his mental, and his spiritual being the subtle influences that make him a Scotchman till the day of his death. It is a great mistake to think that love of country is all spiritual. From the moment a boy commences to observe he assimilates the features and peculiarities of his environment. I do not know the process, but by some strange chemistry the boy, as he grows up and observes the outlines of landscape and the tints of the sky, listens to the songs of the brooks, sees Nature's changes of dress and colour season by season, and listens to the notes of native songsters, has all this photographed in his inner and spiritual being, and he is made his country's man by the very fact this process goes on. Add to that, literature, song, story, art, politics, social life—common joys and sorrows even—each adds its indelible imprint to make the national man. But even the Scotchman cannot be born and brought up both in Scotland and Australia; consequently it is difficult for him to be so thoroughly Australian as Scotchman; and the same takes place all through. What I want to point out is that the wide dispersion of this Empire of ours makes it more difficult to cultivate an Imperial consciousness than it is to cultivate a national consciousness; but the Imperial consciousness is just as necessary for the final success of the Imperial state as the national consciousness is for the national state. And we are growing; the process is naturally and necessarily slower, but it is streaming into our minds, our constitution, our life. Science, in its later applications, has brought the Empire more close than Scotland used to be even to

Scotchmen, and so we are being gradually enabled more and more to visualise the conditions and to feel the impulses of life throughout the whole Empire, to incorporate them into our constitution and growth, to spiritualise and idealise them. Any man who has lived and thought for the last twenty-five years can see the growth of this Imperial consciousness—almost its birth. In a word, the Empire must find its soul, and then organise to ensure its salvation. When we fully realise that this Empire is no longer an abstraction, but a real, splendid entity with living ideals and soulful purpose and tendency, then we shall organise, and then we shall save the Empire.

THE FORCES THAT HELP.

Do you not see the almost numberless and the absolutely invincible elements work to-day to develop that Imperial consciousness? Every man who travels from this country into one of the oversea Dominions is contributing his share. Every telegram that flashes news of the outside parts to you and to us in the outside Dominions from you is doing its share. Every man and woman who, at the fireside or in the school, in magazine or newspaper, on the platform or in the pulpit, teaches what is the breadth and greatness and significance of this Empire, is doing his part; and the multiplied societies and associations whose names are so many that I cannot enumerate them, the legislators in our halls, and the merchants in their offices, are all helping towards a wide Imperial consciousness and working towards an organised plan for the realisation of the ideal which springs therefrom. As we gain that Imperial consciousness, we shall take an Imperial view of certain things to which we have been rather directing ourselves from the smaller national or sectional side. We must reverse that operation—not to the abandonment of the latter, but to the inclusion of the Imperial side as well.

EMPIRE VIEW OF MIGRATION.

One of the questions we ought to view from the Imperial side is the movement of population. Within the Empire, containing 400,000,000 of people, there are only 65,000,000 of the white race, 45,000,000 here and the rest in the outside Dominions. If this Empire is to remain a British Empire and its civilisation to remain British, the British stock must be increased rather than diminished, because other stock is flowing into the vacant spaces of the Empire. You have an idea that the United States, for example, is absorbing a lot of people from outside and that to assimilate them is a great task. But the United States has 90,000,000 of people. It receives for assimilation 1,000,000 yearly. It has 92 people to mother and father each new-comer. Take Canada. This year Canada will perhaps find 500,000 people coming in from abroad. Our population is only 8,000,000. Canada therefore has only 16 people to father and assimilate each new-comer. The problem, I say, is to keep the British stock dominant. You can do it only in two ways—by assimilation, or by actual injection of new British stock. I am not going to put theories before you; but what is the condition in this country? Until comparatively recently, nobody thought about emigration at all. The out-goer went, as and whither he pleased, and in the century that has just passed many many millions of good British stock have filtered out from this country—not to the waste places and vacant spaces of British Possessions, but to alien and foreign countries. If that blood had been directed into the veins of our oversea Possessions, what a different aspect they would have presented to-day. The current is changing somewhat, but not because of united consultation and plan, and scientific endeavour; but while forty per cent. of British stock, leaving this country, fail to come into British Dominions, things are not as they ought to be and might be. Great Britain

may say, "Do not drain my people away from me," and the oversea Dominions may say, "We want as many as we can get of the right kind." Thereby arises a possible clash. But there are some illuminating features.

You have in this Old Country small spaces and dense populations: we have large spaces and small populations. There is demand and supply. You have in this country a surplus of womanhood, amounting to one million and more: we have in the oversea Dominions a lack of womanhood—a lack which all deplore. Here then are millions of your population, taking year upon year, in regard to whom some adjustment might be made which would fill the great want for womanhood that we experience in the outside Dominions, and would open a career and prospect for women who, in this country, do not seem to have such openings.

In this country you have tens of thousands of children— orphan children, deserted children, children worse than orphans, who have to be taken away from their surroundings for their salvation. These count up into thousands and tens of thousands. The oversea Dominions cry for these children, and cannot get the number they want. There, again, is a ground upon which a desirable adjustment might take place.

You have in this country unemployed employables. In so far as you cannot find employment for them, let them go to the oversea Dominions with your blessing, and, if necessary, with your help. Remember, a man is not lost because he migrates from London to Canada or Australia; he is still building up your Empire there, for which you give him no chance here. There is therefore a large margin for adjustment in this class.

Going further, there is a mass of people who are not fit for employment as they stand, but hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of whom could be adapted by a little care and treatment, and translated to new conditions, where hope would enter their hearts and an outlook be given them. To my mind, here is a class of population in regard to which the oversea Dominions and the Mother Country might well join hands, and finances too. A man out of work is in absolute peril; his fibre weakens as he knocks at every door and can find no work to do. Pick up the man before he loses heart, and if you have not a place for him here, help him to some place in the Empire.

Let me pay my tribute to the unselfish, untiring, and philanthropic efforts of many of your societies of men and women in this country, who give themselves infinite trouble and take the most sympathetic pains to save those who would otherwise be lost. They have challenged my admiration, in proportion as I have become more aware of the work they have done and are doing. I am not here to give advice to you, but I would remind you that men and women are not chattels. You cannot dispose of them as you would a shock of wheat, or a barrel of apples; they will go if they want to go, and can get money to go. Britain has to revise something in this country, I think. She must pay a better wage for competent persons and open up conditions which will give hope of future betterment to those who are now shut out, and if she does not do that she must expect to lose sons and daughters—but to lose them, if proper action is taken, thank Heaven! to other parts of the Empire where they will not be lost as elements of strength and permanence in our civilisation.

EMPIRE VIEW OF TRADE.

I think also that we should take an Imperial view of trade and production. I am not touching party policies. I am dealing simply with principles. I have not time to go into this argument, but I want to give you my thought in an illustration. Here is the British individual trader. Here is part of the British Empire—Canada—which we

will personify as the National trader, and here is another personification of the Imperial trader. Watch certain operations. We have grown to deify trade and commerce in abstract and concrete, and we set up these deities in the market place. Shall I startle you if I make the statement that trade and commerce never have and never will create one single atom of wealth? They are simply the middlemen who interchange products and grow rich on the tolls they take therefrom. That is not to say they are not necessary and do not fit absolutely well into the economy of things. But what I want to call attention to is that trade and commerce are not the main things. Production is the main thing. Now for my illustration. Your British trader takes his British ship, he goes to the Argentine Republic, he buys a load of wheat, he takes that wheat to Germany, sells it and buys from Germany a load of manufactured goods, and takes that load back to the Argentine. He has had two good trades, and made his money. He does not care about the country of origin and production: he is in for interchange, and his position is perfectly logical. Now take the Dominion of Canada as a National trader. She takes a cargo of her wheat, and sends it down to the United States, sells it there, buys a return cargo of fruit, brings it up into the North-West, and sells it there. Canada has thus the advantage and profit of one production, the United States has the other. But Canada does another thing. She takes a cargo of wheat and butter from the Middle North-West over to British Columbia, sells it there, buys in British Columbia fruit and lumber, brings it back and sells it to the men of the Middle North-West. Do you see the difference? There, Canada has the advantage of two productions. It means that the British Columbia fruit and lumber industry is vastly impelled and helped, and that the grain and butter producing industries of the middle parts of the North-West are also helped in the same transaction. Canada, if she could, would like to conduct all her interchanges between parts of her own territory. But climate, soil, and geographical position make that impossible. But the Empire, within its vast bounds, can raise nearly every product the Empire needs. She has every soil and climate, every kind of production: and, to the largest extent, Empire trade, if rightly organised, can find its own double production for nineteen-twentieths of all it will use. It is production and development that bring into relief the wonderful possibilities of Empire trade, as I believe coming years will see it. Can we not raise the foods the Empire needs within the bounds of the Empire? Last year £68,000,000 were paid to foreign countries for cotton imported into this country. Think what that means. It means that £68,000,000 go into foreign countries, developing a vast industry, building homes, providing labour, capital, wealth, and everything that is necessary to build up that country. If it were possible to raise this cotton within the bounds of the British Empire, how far would that £68,000,000 go towards fertilising and developing the waste places of this Empire? Last year £37,000,000 were paid for meat. Cannot the Empire furnish the means of supplying its own meat? Somewhere about £56,000,000 were paid for foods of the sorts our Empire produces, and £58,000,000 for wheat and its flour. If it is possible, and in so far as it is possible, to have these and other needed products raised in our own Empire, to supply our own needs, it would revolutionise settlement and development, and wealth-production, and consequent progress in civilisation and advancement.

EMPIRE ORGANISATION.

And now one last word to leave with you. It is simply this—Organisation. Organisation is what has made Canada what she has become. It is what is making Australia what she is becoming. Organisation—other things being equal—brings

success, as lack of it brings failure. Organisation, from the Empire point of view, is then, it seems to me, one of the essentials for our future success. I am not following out the argument in suggesting what can be done. When men really want to do a thing in business, what is the process? They come together, talk over the matter, put plans before one another, analyse, and discuss, and by and by find a proper plan, and then go on to carry it out. It is the only way in which this Empire will ever be organised. It is when all parts get sufficiently interested, and come together in some capacity for consultation and for decision, that you will have a proper Empire organisation. I myself do not believe we shall ever have a perfect organisation until we possess in this Empire some deliberative, directive body, which represents and typifies all parts of the Dominions. Nor am I disappointed because it has not come yet, nor hopeless because it will not come to-morrow nor the next day. Years in the life of a nation or Empire count very little, but that it will come I am certain, and the sooner it comes, supervening upon proper consultation, the better for the Empire. If it would be a gain to the people of the outside Dominions—and who doubts it?—to have the counsel and work of your seasoned able men in this part of the Empire, would it be altogether a disadvantage to you if you were to call in men from the oversea Dominions, and mingle your counsels with theirs for the general good of the Empire? This Empire of ours—do you ever try to visualise it? Have you considered its vast area, its large population, its almost innumerable productions, its magnificent figures of interchange, and its equipment of forces as they stand to-day? Let memory work backwards. It was not always thus. There has been a splendid growth. Let imagination work forwards. Think what it may be fifty, a hundred, a thousand years from now; and as the splendid vision grows it unfolds an ideal such as no people, from the earliest dawn of time, have beheld—the ideal of a great, multiplied, and extended British Civilisation, which we, here, and men abroad may unite in declaring to be one of the most beneficent instrumentalities ever given to the world. What it is now, what it may be in a hundred years and more from now, if we do our duty and rise to our responsibilities, the pen of no writer and the tongue of no speaker can avail to predict.

The CHAIRMAN said he would not be fulfilling properly the duties appertaining to the Chair if he did not convey to Mr. Foster at once, on behalf of all present, an expression of their profound and grateful thanks to him for the inspiring address to which it had been their privilege to listen. He doubted if there had ever been presented from that platform a more able statement as to the law which regulated the growth of Imperial evolution.

Hon. A. L. SIMON (Prime Minister of Alberta) proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, and, alluding to Mr. Foster, said he had anticipated great pleasure in listening to the address of a man whose reputation as an orator had spread throughout the Dominion and had now become Empire wide, and he had not been disappointed.